

TRANSPORTATION

City of Atlanta Launches Its First Bottom-Up Transportation Planning Effort

THE BELTLINE, PEACHTREE CORRIDOR streetcars, possible new MARTA stations and the vision for a multi-modal destination that unites the region’s bus systems are all exciting proposals that aren’t that far from becoming a reality.

Last November, the City of Atlanta launched a major effort to coordinate all of these projects, plus many more, with its first ever Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The goal of the plan is to meet the needs of commuters and their varied trips to and within the City of Atlanta. Called “Connect Atlanta,” the plan will evaluate all modes of transport and will promote policies and resources that, among other things, connects transportation infrastructure to jobs, land use and recreation, creates an affordable and walkable city, enhances mobility within the city, supports regional connectivity and maintains and optimizes city’s existing transportation systems.

Plus, the city’s planning effort contains another element that makes it one for the history books: it is a true grassroots, bottom-up approach to transportation planning. Most transportation plans begin with planners and a methodical analysis of local government transportation project proposals. Those projects are then put into draft form and are presented to the public for comment.



Paul Moore, a planning consultant with the firm of Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin working for the City of Atlanta, said that nearly seven times the relative land area in the city has been used for freeway construction when compared to the region as a whole.

“Connect Atlanta” will essentially function in the opposite direction. City of Atlanta stakeholders will offer their ideas for transportation improvements first. In another groundbreaking move, all residents of the city have been invited to serve as stakeholders.

“The development and implementation of the Connect Atlanta plan is crucial in order to ensure a healthy, vibrant, mobile and high quality of life for the City of Atlanta. However, metropolitan Atlantans should care about this plan as well,” said Heather Alhadeff, assistant director of the City of Atlanta Bureau of Planning. “Every transportation mode – from aviation, highways, transit, freight – passes through and impacts the central



Rendering of Peachtree Corridor

city. It is imperative that the Connect Atlanta plan be developed, accepted and promoted by all our users, which includes residents, commuters and visitors.”

It’s a critical time for Atlanta to begin assessing its transportation challenges and opportunities. After losing population between 1970 and 2000, the City of Atlanta is indeed growing again. Already the center of the fastest growing region in the United States – home to the world’s busiest international airport and the junction of three major interstate highways and two major railroad networks – the City of Atlanta experienced its

largest single-year population gain in more than 35 years last year, adding 12,600 persons.

From 2000 to 2005, the City of Atlanta added more than 25,000 new residents, an addition of 5,125 persons each year. In the last two years, however, the City has averaged more than 11,000 new residents each year.

Atlanta’s resurgence in population and urban vitality, as well as its central role in supporting connectivity and economic development in neighboring suburban communities, makes the “Connect Atlanta” effort one of utmost importance to the metro region as a whole.

UPCOMING ARC MEETINGS

FEBRUARY 2008

- 5** **1:30 p.m.**
ARC Advisory Committee on Aging,
ARC Offices
- 8** **9:30 a.m.**
Transportation Coordinating Committee,
ARC Offices
- 14** **10:00 a.m.**
Transportation and Air Quality Committee,
Amphitheater/ARC Board Room
- 11:30 a.m.**
Aging Services Committee,
Harry West Community Room
- 12:00 noon**
Environment and Land Use Committee,
Executive Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m.**
Communications and Public Involvement
Committee, Harry West Community Room
- 22** **9:30 a.m.**
Transportation Coordinating Committee,
ARC Offices
- 27** **12:00 noon**
Executive Committee,
Executive Conference Room
- 1:00 p.m.**
ARC Board Meeting,
Amphitheater/ARC Board Room
- 28** **9:30 a.m.**
Land Use Coordinating Committee,
ARC Offices

MARCH 2008

- 4** **1:30 p.m.**
ARC Advisory Committee on Aging,
ARC Offices
- 7** **9:30 a.m.**
Land Use Committee, ARC Offices
- 9:30 a.m.**
Transportation Coordinating Committee,
ARC Offices
- 13** **10:00 a.m.**
Transportation and Air Quality Committee,
Amphitheater/ARC Board Room
- 11:30 a.m.**
Aging Services Committee,
Harry West Community Room
- 12:00 noon**
Environment and Land Use Committee,
Executive Conference Room
- 1:30 p.m.**
Communications and Public Involvement
Committee, Harry West Community Room
- 21** **9:30 a.m.**
Transportation Coordinating Committee,
ARC Offices
- 26** **12:00 noon**
Executive Committee,
Executive Conference Room
- 1:00 p.m.**
ARC Board Meeting,
Amphitheater/ARC Board Room
- 27** **9:30 a.m.**
Land Use Coordinating Committee,
ARC Offices

For more information, please call 404.463.3100 or consult ARC’s Web site at www.atlantaregional.com.